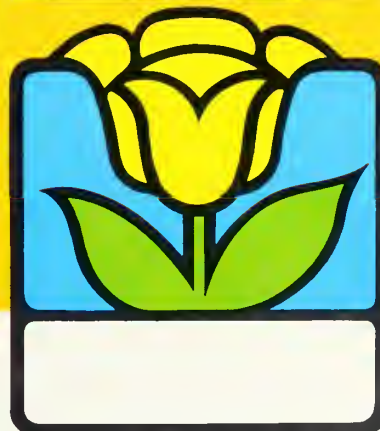
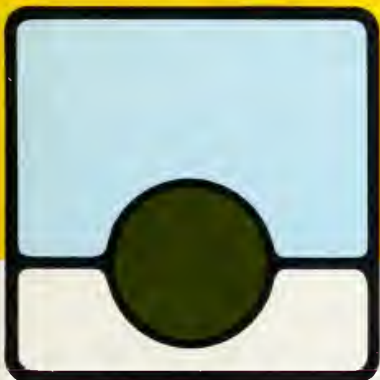


S
371.9
P11h
1980
[redacted]

Special Education helps kids learn better,
behave better, grow up happier!



Help a child grow.

Office of Public Instruction • Helena, Montana

Good news for parents ...

Special equipment and teaching
methods make a big difference.



Learning potential job skills is an
important part of the school day



Across Montana today, thousands of kids with a wide variety of learning difficulties are enrolled in Special Education programs. Each child's learning program is planned individually, to help him make the most of his potential.

Why? Because the law says that all school-age children have a right to be educated within the public school system, at no cost to their parents. No matter how severe their learning problems may be.

This speech therapist works with a mirror so her young students can see and imitate correct lip and jaw movements



In Montana, kids with physical handicaps ride safely to school in specially equipped buses. And schools have wheelchair ramps so that no child is excluded because of architectural barriers.



What is a learning problem?

A learning problem is any condition that interferes with learning. It may be mild or severe. It may be temporary or permanent. It may be physical, mental or emotional. Or it may be a combination of several conditions.

Special Education can help these learning problems:

- 1. SPEECH AND LANGUAGE IMPAIRMENT** These kids have trouble speaking clearly or using and understanding language.
- 2. LEARNING DISABILITIES** There are a number of children who are not blind, deaf or mentally retarded, but who have trouble learning by the usual teaching methods used in the schools. Without special teaching techniques, these kids have great difficulty learning to read, write, spell and do math. Albert Einstein and Michelangelo were both learning disabled!

3. MENTAL RETARDATION These kids learn more slowly than other children. But with Special Education, most mentally retarded children can learn self-care and potential job skills. Most graduate from school equipped to hold a job and live independently.

4. SENSORY HANDICAPS Children who have trouble hearing or seeing have sensory handicaps. Very specialized educational services are available to help them cope with these handicaps, and live happy and productive lives.

5. PHYSICAL HANDICAPS The educational performance of these children is hindered by a physical impairment resulting from illness, injury, or a condition present at birth.

6. SEVERE EMOTIONAL HANDICAPS These kids can range from overly hostile and aggressive to very shy and withdrawn. But in both cases, the child's behavior interferes with learning.

7. MULTIPLE HANDICAPS Some kids have—at the same time—two or more handicaps that interfere with learning. For example, a child might be mentally retarded and blind, or physically handicapped and deaf, etc. These children usually receive several Special Education services.

At left, this multiply handicapped little girl is learning head control at school, to enable her to lift her head and explore her surroundings. At right, a Special Education home trainer shows her mother how to teach her similar skills at home.



Does your child have a learning problem?

Does he need special help?

Here's how you find out:

1. DISCUSS YOUR CONCERN

First, call your local school principal or Special Education director, and say that you think your child may need special help.

Or, call toll free 1-800-332-3402, and ask for "Help a child grow." You'll talk with a Montana special educator who understands the problems of handicapped children and their parents.

2. ASK TO HAVE YOUR CHILD SCREENED

A Special Education teacher will visit with you and your child (at home or at the school), and observe your child's abilities and skills in several areas. This is called "screening."

Then, if the teacher believes that your child may need special help, and if you agree, your child will be referred to a Child Study Team for a complete evaluation by experts.



Mom watches this Special Education teacher play a game with her youngster as part of the screening process to determine if he needs special help.

3. THE CHILD STUDY TEAM

A careful evaluation of your child's total physical, mental and emotional development is done by a Child Study Team consisting of you, the child's teacher or principal (if any), and if appropriate to your child's problem, any of the following professionals: psychologist, physician, vision or hearing consultant, speech therapist, audiologist, etc.

You and these professionals will work together to gather all important information about your child—his strengths and skills, his special problems, and the kind of teaching that will help him most.



Parents are essential members of the Child Study Team. Their first-hand, round-the-clock knowledge of their child is invaluable.

4. THE EVALUATION PROCESS

Evaluation by the Child Study Team will give you a complete picture of the needs of your child. During the process, your child may be observed by several professionals. And the evaluation may involve different kinds of tests to show how your child learns, and what kind of special help he needs.

Interviews with you, the parent, are an important part of the evaluation process, because you know your child better than anybody else.

5. YOUR CHILD'S INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM

After all members of the Child Study Team (including you) have agreed on your child's learning problems and needs, an Individualized Education Program will be developed especially for your child.

Your child's Individualized Education Program may include services like speech or physical therapy if they are needed to help him do his best. And every effort will be made so he can work, learn and play alongside other children or have the same experiences as they do.



Physical therapy is an important part of this little girl's Individualized Education Program. Here she is working on correct use of her leg muscles by stepping up and over the rungs of a ladder



Lunch time is speech time, too. As she eats lunch, this youngster is learning lip, jaw and tongue control that will also help her speak more clearly.

6. ENROLLING YOUR CHILD IN THE PROGRAM

Once you have approved the short-range and long-term goals outlined in your child's Individualized Education Program, and the special services to be provided, your child will start receiving special help.



In all school activities, teachers record each child's daily progress toward goals established in the Individualized Education Program.

7. REVIEWING YOUR CHILD'S PROGRAM

You, the parent, participate in all decisions made about your child. Nothing is done without your knowledge, input and approval. Once a year, and more often if you wish, your child's progress will be reviewed with you to be sure that goals are being met and that the program is benefiting your child.

When learning problems are identified early, kids make better progress.

Preschool programs for special children are available in some areas of Montana. And all school districts can arrange for the evaluation of your preschool child.

- Some kinds of learning problems can be helped or completely corrected by the time a preschooler is ready to enter first grade.
- And with more severe learning difficulties, faster progress can be made when the condition is recognized early.

If you think your preschooler has trouble learning, act now to identify the problem.



Play activities are designed to help kids function as members of a group as well as develop good motor coordination and follow directions correctly



12 out of every 100 children need some kind of special help in school ...



The children in this small reading group have a variety of learning disabilities, so even within the group, the teacher responds individually to the needs of each child.

If you think your child has a problem that interferes with his ability to learn, don't wait. Even if you're not sure.

Special education is a lot of different services for a lot of different kinds of learning problems. It does make a difference. But the first step is yours.

Take the first step for your child:

- Pick up the phone. Call your local school principal.
- OR**
- Get information and assistance from a Montana special educator by calling the state Office of Public Instruction, toll free, 1-800-332-3402. Ask for "Help a child grow."
- OR**
- Fill out and mail the coupon below. Of course, your inquiry will be strictly confidential.

I'm interested!

I want to know more about Special Education in Montana. Please send me, at no charge:

- ___ Parents' Guide 1—The Education of Handicapped Children
- ___ Parents' Guide 2—The Evaluation and Child Study Team
- ___ Parents' Guide 3—Your Child's Individualized Education Program
- ___ Parents' Guide 4—Your Rights as the Parent of a Handicapped Child
- ___ How They Grow. A child-development checklist for parents.
- ___ I'd like to talk with a Montana special educator about Special Education opportunities for my child. Please contact me.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____

STATE _____ ZIP _____

PHONE _____

Clip and mail to:
Help a child grow.
Office of Public Instruction
Helena, MT 59601



The music teacher reinforces other classroom activities with songs and games that teach colors, shapes, sounds and movements.



Plenty of individual attention is an important ingredient in every child's Special Education program.



Help a child grow.

Produced by Montana Office of Public Instruction,
Georgia Rice, Superintendent.